

May 2001 Highlights

New Jersey's construction boom continued in May. The estimated cost of work authorized by building permits was \$1.1 billion. This was the highest monthly total in the more than five years that the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs has published building permit data. Residential construction, which includes new houses as well as work on existing ones, totaled \$461.9 million, 43.6 percent of all activity. Office, retail, and other work on nonresidential structures totaled \$597.7 million, 56.4 percent; 520 municipalities reported. There were 2,506 new houses built in May, up 22 percent compared to last month. New office space totaled 1.8 million square feet, almost double the amount in April, and new retail space amounted to 403,177 square feet, 28 percent more than last month.

Top Towns

Jersey City in Hudson County led all municipalities. The estimated cost of work in New Jersey's second largest city was \$58.6 million. The shell for a new, 18-story office building broke ground in May with an estimated construction cost of \$49.1 million. When complete, the high-rise is expected to have 584,000 square feet of new office space. Since January 2001, Jersey City has authorized 1,380,745 square feet of new office space, more than any other municipality. The City issued permits for 771 new dwellings, and authorized residential and nonresidential construction with a total estimated cost of \$306.8 million, also top among municipalities between January and May.

Ewing Township in Mercer County, Woodbridge Township in Middlesex County, and Mount Olive Township in Monmouth County also had big permits in May. The total cost of all work in Ewing was \$26.5 million. Most of this (\$25.1 million) was for a new, 335,412-square-foot airline hanger/office complex. Of the \$24.2 million of work reported in Woodbridge in May, over \$19 million was for two updates authorizing additional work on a community center that broke ground in 1999. The amenities in the facility include a pool, and roller and ice skating rinks. Mount Olive reported two big projects in May: a 567,769-square-foot warehouse for a toy distributor (\$18 million) and a new, 142,120-square-foot store for a general merchandise retailer (\$2.4 million).

Major Construction Indicators, New Jersey: January – May				
Period	Estimated Cost of Construction	Authorized Housing Units	Authorized Office Space (square feet)	Authorized Retail Space (square feet)
January – May '98	\$3,164,853,868	11,956	3,034,481	3,583,066
January – May '99	\$3,943,487,194	12,635	4,203,626	2,876,614
January – May '00	\$3,868,595,659	13,618	5,278,447	2,066,933
January – May '01	\$4,782,986,399	13,001	7,229,819	2,404,072
<i>Difference Between 1999 and 2000</i>				
1999-2000	\$914,390,740	(617)	1,951,372	337,139
Percent Change	23.6%	(4.5%)	37.0%	16.3%
Source: N.J. Department of Community Affairs, 7/20/01				